



# Indian Health Service PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: (301) 443-3593, FAX (301) 443-0507

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## Indian Health Service Selects Aberdeen Area Director

Donald W. Lee, M.S., a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, has been selected as Area Director for the Indian Health Service (IHS) Aberdeen Area Office. Charles W. Grim, D.D.S., M.H.S.A., the Director of the IHS, an agency in the Department of Health and Human Services, announced his appointment after a selection process that included tribal and urban Indian representation and recommendations.

“Mr. Lee has served in the Aberdeen Area throughout his 18-year career with the IHS,” said Dr. Grim. “His experience in financial and administrative management, and his background serving various tribal populations as the Executive Officer for several service units of the Area, have provided him with the necessary skills to now manage the health programs providing services to the Indian people of the Area and to work with the tribal leaders.”

Mr. Lee is anticipated to begin his tenure as the Area Director on January 12, 2004, following the completion of the transition from his current position as the Service Unit Director for the Cheyenne River Service Unit.

As Director of the Aberdeen Area, Mr. Lee will have administrative responsibility for eight hospitals, seven health centers, and several health stations and clinics over a four-state area. He will manage varied direct service health programs and public health services for more than 113,000 American Indians eligible for IHS services. The Aberdeen Area Office serves 17 Tribes and supports two urban programs; one located in Pierre, S.D., and the other in Omaha, Neb. The Aberdeen Area has more than 2600 employees and has an annual recurring budget of over \$220 million.

As one of 12 Area Directors, Mr. Lee holds a key position that will influence national Indian health policy and initiatives. The strong interest that the Aberdeen Area Tribes have in the health services provided by the IHS, as well as the development of an initiative to conduct an annual national meeting of the direct service Tribes, will result in increased opportunities to shape the future of the Agency as well as the IHS Aberdeen Area.

“The Tribes in the Aberdeen Area are committed to improving their health care delivery system,” stated Mr. Lee. “I look forward to working in partnership with them to further enhance our health care system and strengthen our quality of services. It is an honor to serve as the Area Director and a privilege to work with the dedicated and committed employees of the Area for the benefit of Indian people.”



NOTICE TO EDITORS: To schedule an interview with Donald Lee, contact Verna Miller at 301-443-3593. A copy of Mr. Lee's biography is available at [www.ihs.gov/publicinfo](http://www.ihs.gov/publicinfo). Additional information about the IHS is available on the IHS website <http://www.ihs.gov> and <http://info.ihs.gov>

